



THE LORD'S DAY AT HOME

THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD (B) Sunday 10th January 2021

If you are housebound or self-isolating at this time, please use these prayers to unite yourself with the worship of the Universal Church, and your own Parish this Sunday. If alone, read or say these prayers quietly to yourself. If with another, or in a family, someone should read the "leader" parts, and others respond. It might be suitable to find a special, quiet place at home for your Sunday prayers.

THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

Entrance Antiphon

A: After the Lord was baptized, the heavens were opened, and the Spirit descended upon him like a dove, and the voice of the Father thundered: This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.

Sign of the Cross

Leader: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

A: Amen.

Introduction

L: This is (surprisingly!) the last day of the Christmas Season. Christmas is not just about the birth of Jesus, but the *revealing* of this child as the Son of God – something that happens explicitly in the moment of his baptism, when the voice of God is heard from heaven saying exactly that! Baptism is the beginning of the public ministry of Jesus, just as our baptism is the beginning of our life of discipleship in the family of the Church. Let us pray that we may recognise Jesus as the Son of God, and pledge ourselves anew to follow him. We acclaim his glory one more time, as the angels did on the night of his birth, saying:

Gloria

A: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will. We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father. Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Opening Prayer

L: Let us pray.

Almighty ever-living God, who, when Christ had been baptized in the River Jordan and as the Holy Spirit descended upon him, solemnly declared him your beloved Son, grant that your children by adoption, reborn of water and the Holy Spirit, may always be well pleasing to you. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

A: Amen.

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

Gospel Reading

Mark 1:7-11

In the course of his preaching John the Baptist said: 'Someone is following me, someone who is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to kneel down and undo the strap of his sandals. I have baptised you with water, but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit.' It was at this time that Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptised in the Jordan by John. No sooner had he come up out of the water than he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit, like a dove, descending on him. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; my favour rests on you.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

A: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

Reflection

This is a powerful reading, describing a moment when God's plan is revealed in the most dramatic way: the "heavens are torn open", the Spirit is revealed as a dove, and the Father's voice thunders from the opened heavens! Our own baptism was probably less dramatic! And yet, it was the same: Divine power poured from heaven to touch you: the Spirit of God descended, and the voice of the Father spoke in that moment to say of you, "You are my daughter, my son, the beloved." How do we live up to the gift God has given us in baptism?

For our Younger Friends

Chances are you were very small when you were baptised, though some of you may remember that day: baptism is something that only happens once, because it changes us, making us part of Jesus himself. Perhaps after this prayer you could ask your family about your baptism – do they have any photographs or other reminders of that day? Then think: I became part of Jesus that day – what am I doing now to show I am part of him?

If gathering as a family, perhaps now continue to discuss what this Gospel passage means to you. If alone, think about what key message you take from the Scriptures today.

Optional: Renewal of Baptism Promises

It would be suitable today to renew the promises of your own baptism: prepare a bowl or basin of fresh water beside a lighted candle (your baptism candle would be great!) If gathered as a family, the leader says the prayer and asks the questions and all reply:

L: Father, you give us grace through sacramental signs, which tell us of the wonders of your unseen power. In baptism we use your gift of water, which you have made a rich symbol of the grace you give us in this sacrament. At the very dawn of creation your Spirit breathed on the waters, making them the wellspring of all holiness. The waters of the great flood you made a sign of the waters of baptism, that make an end of sin and a new beginning of goodness. Through the waters of the Red Sea you led Israel out of slavery, to be an image of God's holy people, set free from sin by baptism. In the waters of the Jordan your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Spirit. Your Son willed that water and blood should flow from his side as he hung upon the cross. After his resurrection he told his disciples: "Go out and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." May this water, which you have created, remind us now of the grace imparted by our Baptism, when we were reborn into the death and resurrection of Jesus, your Son, and began a new life as your own beloved children. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

A: Amen.

L: Do you renounce sin, so as to live in the freedom of the children of God?

A: I do.

L: Do you renounce the lure of evil, so that sin may have no mastery over you?

A: I do.

L: Do you renounce Satan, the author and prince of sin?

A: I do.

L: Do you believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth?

A: I do.

L: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered death and was buried, rose again from the dead, and is seated at the right hand of the Father?

A: I do.

L: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and life everlasting?

A: I do.

[*If alone, simply make the Profession of Faith as usual, saying:*

I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended into hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.]

L: And may almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has given us new birth by water and the Holy Spirit and bestowed on us forgiveness of our sins, keep us by his grace, in Christ Jesus our Lord, for eternal life.

A: Amen.

All now make the Sign of the Cross with the water in the bowl. Make sure you keep it safe after this service, perhaps near the front door.

Intercessions

L: The Lord baptizes us with the Holy Spirit: as his disciples, we are urged to pray for the needs of all peoples. And so we turn to him now in prayer:

L: For world leaders, that they will seek to protect people, especially where water is scarce, polluted or wasted. Lord, in your mercy ...

A: Hear our prayer.

L: For parents waiting to have a child baptized. Lord, in your mercy ...

A: Hear our prayer.

L: We pray for ourselves and all members of the Church, that we may have a deeper appreciation of the Baptism that has made us children of God. Lord, in your mercy ...

A: Hear our prayer.

L: For all who have died, that they may now receive the gift promised in Baptism, of eternal life in the Risen Lord. Lord, in your mercy ...

A: Hear our prayer.

Please add your own prayers for the needs of the Church, the world and your local community. You may wish to add particular prayers for family members, friends or neighbours in need at this time.

THE COMMUNION RITE

The Lord's Prayer

L: At the Saviour's command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say:

A: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

L: Accept, O Lord, the prayers we offer to honour the revealing of your beloved Son, so that the oblation of your faithful may be transformed into the sacrifice of him who willed in his compassion to wash away the sins of the world. Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

A: Amen.

Before Spiritual Communion

L: Loving Father, in the waters of the Jordan you revealed with signs and wonders a new Baptism, so that through the voice that came down from heaven we might come to believe in your Word dwelling among us, and by the Spirit's descending in the likeness of a dove we might know that Christ your Servant has been anointed with the oil of gladness and sent to bring the good news to the poor. To complete this mystery of salvation, at the Last Supper he showed the fullness of your love, as he gave his Body and Blood for his people. Even though we are not in Church, and not able to receive communion today, we open our minds and hearts now to your generous love and the gift of

Jesus your Son, welcoming him spiritually into our lives.

Spiritual Communion

A: My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Holy Sacrament of the altar. I love you above all things and I passionately desire to receive you into my soul. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come spiritually into my soul so that I may unite myself wholly to you now and forever. Amen.

Pause for a moment of silent prayer and reflection.

Thanksgiving Psalm

L: The Lord will bless his people with peace.

A: The Lord will bless his people with peace.

L: O give the Lord, you sons of God, give the Lord glory and power; give the Lord the glory of his name. Adore the Lord in his holy court.

A: The Lord will bless his people with peace.

L: The Lord's voice resounding on the waters, the Lord on the immensity of waters; the voice of the Lord, full of power, the voice of the Lord, full of splendour.

A: The Lord will bless his people with peace.

L: The God of glory thunders. In his temple they all cry: 'Glory!' The Lord sat enthroned over the flood; the Lord sits as king for ever.

A: The Lord will bless his people with peace.

THE CONCLUDING RITES

Final Prayer and Blessing

L: Let us pray.

Lord our God, we humbly ask you, that, through the working of this mystery, our offences may be cleansed and our just desires fulfilled. Through Christ our Lord.

A: Amen.

L: May the Lord ✠ bless us, protect us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.

A: Amen.

L: Let us bless the Lord!

A: Thanks be to God!